is left to the imagination of the audience assisted by conventional and therefore well understood motions of the actors. As the actor stoops the audience perceives that he is entering a door, even though no building is apparent. Certain gestures indicate that he is mounting his steed, although no horse is there. In contrast with the scenery, the costumes are often rich and elaborate, and masks are much in evidence. Here again convention has been followed. A character carrying a wand tipped with white horse-tail hair is known to represent a supernatural being. A red mask proclaims the wearer to be of an upright character and a black one is worn by those of cruel and severe dispositions. The painting of faces is closely governed by custom and the audience resents any departure from what is expected in the make-up of a particular character. During the course of the play attendants move about the stage rearranging the chairs and tables and perhaps serving the actors with tea. Much of the acting consists of postures and gestures which again are governed by convention. To perform them correctly and gracefully in a manner acceptable to a critical audience requires both ability and practice.

The themes of the plays vary greatly. They include comedy and tragedy, avowed fiction and historical episodes. A favorite period from which to draw stories is the Three Kingdoms, perhaps in part because of the popularity of the famous novel with that title. Some of the plays are long but others are very short. Performances may be given afternoon and evening and may last for six or seven hours. In both, however, it is usual to present several plays, or, perhaps, famous scenes from some of the longer

ones. In a play singing, spoken dialogue, and dancing (or posturing) may all be found. There is, too, a type of acrobatic posturing representing fighting. It seems probable that the types of programs now seen on the stage spring from a variety of origins—that the military plays symbolizing fighting (for instance) have come from one set of early ceremonials and that the others have grown up quite distinct from them. To-day both may be seen on the same stage.

Some of the theatrical troupes are large, with fifty or a hundred members. Others, usually itinerant, are small, sometimes with only two members. Although actors are regarded as socially inferior and are usuallv recruited from the lower classes, some